



Incident Command System Incident Commander (IC)

Overview

User

The user of this job aid will be anyone who is assigned as Incident Commander within the Incident Command System (ICS). The Incident Commander position is extremely complex and requires personnel with extensive experience and the ability to think holistically (non-linearly).

The Incident Commander must have the ability to effectively communicate with the public during crisis/non-crisis situations and bring a cohesive and effective local response organization to bear on an incident in a high-risk environment.

Formal training in Risk Communication techniques and everyday public affairs should be considered a must for the IC position. A critical skill is the IC's ability to bring together the membership of a local response community, some of whom he/she has no authority over, and form a consensus building organization.

When to Use

This job aid should be used to assist the Incident Commander whenever an incident has occurred that requires the Incident Command System organization to respond.

Major Accomplishments

Below is a list of the major accomplishments needed to obtain best response:

- Accurate assessment of situation
- Determination of goals, objectives and strategies
- Effective and efficient ICS organization
- Well informed and satisfied stakeholders and staff
- Incident Command System demobilized

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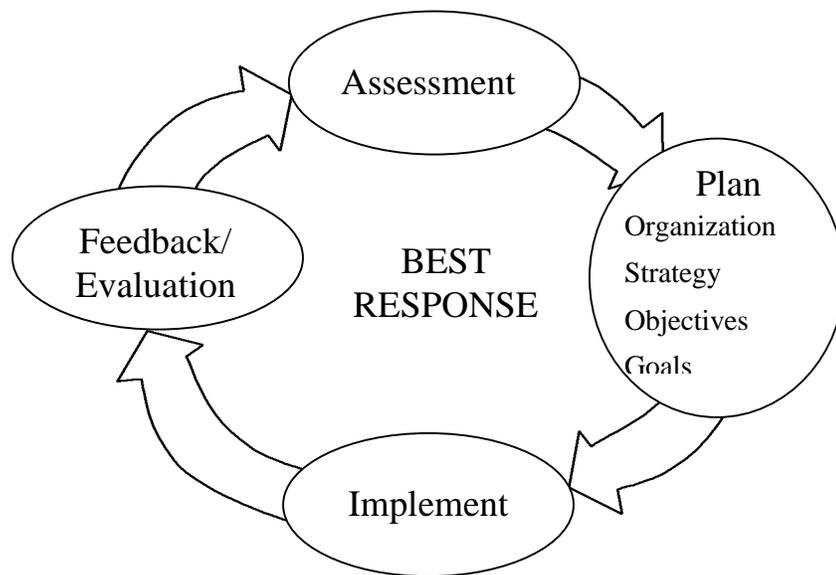


Overview (Cont'd)

What is Best Response?

Best response is achieved when:

- Response objectives established/communicated
- Accurate/timely info on impact to people, property, environment, economy
- Positive media coverage of response
- Positive meetings with stakeholders
- Economic impact to stakeholders minimized
- Prompt, correct handling of damage claims
- Stakeholders well informed of rights/issues
- Response Management System employed
- Sufficient/efficient resources brought to bear
- Leadership and responsibility is clear (minimal duplication)
- No response worker deaths, injuries, or mishaps
- No incident-related public injuries, illness, or deaths
- Impacts on the economy minimized



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Overview (Cont'd)

References

Below is a list of references that may be required while using this job aid; they should be provided by other ICS staff.

Oil Spill Field Operations Guide (ICS OS-420-1)	NIIMS ICS Position Manual, Incident Commander (NFES 1985)
Communications Plan	NIIMS Task Book for Incident Commander (NFES 2300)
Incident Command System (COMTINST 3120.14)	Area/Regional Contingency Plans Charts and maps

Materials

Ensure these materials are available to the Incident Commander during an incident.

- Complete set of ICS job aids
 - ICS Forms Catalog
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General Information

All radio communications to Incident Communications Center will be addressed: “(Incident Name) Communications”.

Use clear text and ICS terminology (no codes) in all radio transmissions.



Initial Actions

General Tasks

Below are the initial actions to take for a person assigned as and/or assuming the responsibilities of Incident Commander.

STEP	ACTION	
1.	Obtain a brief from the initial Incident Commander using the ICS 201. Determine the following: Size and complexity of incident Initial objectives Current organization Agencies/organizations/stakeholders involved Special concerns	
2.	Assess operational implications of information provided in initial report SAR Salvage Fire fighting Navigation Population safety Response operations	
3.	Determine other critical information needed from staff	
4.	Brief Agency Administrator when required by Agency policy.	
5.	Identify the sources of incident funding and anticipate daily expenditures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage costs • Identify approval authorities • Determine ceiling for response operations • Consider cost-benefit implications in resource selection/use 	

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Initial Actions (Cont'd)

General Tasks (Cont'd)

The initial actions to take for a person assigned as and/or assuming the responsibilities of Incident Commander are continued below.

STEP	ACTION	
6.	<p>Use the flowchart below to assess incident command organization needs</p> <pre> graph TD Q1[Can the responding resource handle the incident?] -- No --> A[A. Activate initial ICS functions and continue with Step 7] Q1 -- Yes --> Q2[Will the duration of the incident exceed resource endurance?] Q2 -- Yes --> A Q2 -- No --> Q3[Are there potential implications: • Political • Economic • Environmental] Q3 -- Yes --> A Q3 -- No --> B[Ensure proper completion of incident] </pre>	
7.	Complete transfer of command and relieve the initial Incident Commander	
8.	Develop your strategies and immediate objectives	
9.	Determine the need for Unified Command	

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Initial Actions (Cont'd)

General Tasks (Cont'd)

The initial actions to take for a person assigned as and/or assuming the responsibilities of Incident Commander are continued below.

STEP	ACTION							
10.	Negotiate participation in Unified Command NOTE: Those stakeholders who are sorted OUT of UC are likely candidates for agency representatives under the purview of the Liaison Officer							
11.	Use the decision table below to determine actions to take <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>IF:</th> <th>THEN:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Unified Command</td> <td> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure PSC identifies and contacts unified command members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State representatives - Responsible party(ies) - Other representatives with jurisdictional authority AND functional responsibilities 2. Hold Initial UC Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clarify roles of UC members -Agree on basic Organization (CMD and GEN Staff positions) -Agree on media procedures -Agree on Safety procedures -Considerations, concerns, issues -Develop Initial Objectives -Adopt an overall strategy 3. Make decisions about space/support needs based on UC organization </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Incident Command</td> <td>Make decisions about space/support needs based on IC organization</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	IF:	THEN:	Unified Command	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure PSC identifies and contacts unified command members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State representatives - Responsible party(ies) - Other representatives with jurisdictional authority AND functional responsibilities 2. Hold Initial UC Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clarify roles of UC members -Agree on basic Organization (CMD and GEN Staff positions) -Agree on media procedures -Agree on Safety procedures -Considerations, concerns, issues -Develop Initial Objectives -Adopt an overall strategy 3. Make decisions about space/support needs based on UC organization 	Incident Command	Make decisions about space/support needs based on IC organization	
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Initial Actions (Cont'd)

General Tasks (Cont'd)

The initial actions to take for a person assigned as and/or assuming the responsibilities of Incident Commander are continued below.

STEP	ACTION	
12.	<p>Identify any technical specialists needed to assist Incident Commander and Unified Command</p> <p>NOTE: Technical Specialists are defined as personnel with special skills that can be used <u>anywhere</u> within the ICS organization.</p> <p><i>Examples of Technical Specialists: Critical Incident Stress Debrief (CISD) teams, CG Strike Teams, District Legal Officer, Navy Supervisor of Salvage, State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Marine Safety Center, DOD Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, Scientific Support Coordinator, National Pollution Funds Center, Historian</i></p>	
13.	Evaluate location of command post for possible relocation	
14.	If necessary, have LSC obtain/set up work space for relocated incident command post	

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Initial Actions (Cont'd)

General Tasks (Cont'd)

The initial actions to take for a person assigned as and/or assuming the responsibilities of Incident Commander are continued below.

STEP	ACTION	
15.	Evaluate Staffing needs for the following ICS functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputy Incident Commander • Operations Section • Planning Section • Logistics Section • Finance/Admin Section • Safety • Information • Liaison <p>NOTE: The size of the incident will dictate how many people will be needed to effectively respond. Use span of control rule, page 13.</p>	
16.	Set up and conduct briefing for Section Chiefs and Command Staff Size and complexity of the incident Incident objectives IC's expectations Policy on outside information dissemination (media and agency) Agencies/organizations/stakeholders/business community Incident activities/situation Special concerns	
17.	Provide regular briefings to Agency Administrator(s)	
18.	Determine need for additional support from incident specific sources (Regional Response Team, SAR Mission Coordinator, DOD elements, etc). Establish briefing protocol.	



Situation Accurately Assessed

Situation Assessment Below is a checklist to assist in the ongoing assessment of the situation.

STEP	ACTION										
1.	Determine critical information needed from staff										
2.	Assess operational implications of information provided in initial report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAR • Salvage • Fire fighting • Navigation • Population safety • Response operations • Inspection waivers 										
3.	Personally observe incident NOTE: In company with other Unified Command representatives if using Unified Command organization										
4.	Review/approve Incident Action Plans										
5.	Determine when to transition from ICS 201 to IAP <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">This Operational Period</th> <th>Next Operational Period</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 150px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Updated Incident Briefing ICS 201</td> <td>Updated Incident Briefing ICS 201</td> <td>Incident Action Plan</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	This Operational Period		Next Operational Period				Updated Incident Briefing ICS 201	Updated Incident Briefing ICS 201	Incident Action Plan	
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Situation Accurately Assessed (Cont'd)

Situation Assessment (Cont'd) The checklist to assist in the ongoing assessment of the situation is continued below.

STEP	ACTION												
6.	<p>The staff will use the planning cycle illustrated below to develop the IAP:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">IF</th> <th style="width: 45%;">AND Event is:</th> <th style="width: 30%;">THEN</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="4" style="text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">Submission Deadline = X</td> <td style="text-align: center;">IC/UC command objectives</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X - 8</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Pre-planning meeting</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X - 6</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Planning meeting</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X - 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">IAP preparation</td> <td style="text-align: center;">X - 2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This IAP development schedule should be used to negotiate the submission deadline for the first IAP. The PSC is responsible for ensuring the IC understands the development cycle and the time needed to produce the IAP.</p> <p>NOTE: The IC/UC must set objectives early in the planning cycle in order for the IAP process to be successful.</p> <p>NOTE: These times are approximated for the first cycle and may vary significantly based on incident complexity and length of operational period.</p>	IF	AND Event is:	THEN	Submission Deadline = X	IC/UC command objectives	X - 8	Pre-planning meeting	X - 6	Planning meeting	X - 3	IAP preparation	X - 2
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	Planning meeting	X - 3											
	IAP preparation	X - 2											

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Situation Accurately Assessed (Cont'd)

Situation Assessment (Cont'd) The checklist to assist in the ongoing assessment of the situation is continued below.

7.	Identify additional stakeholders – those individuals and groups who potentially are adversely affected by the incident	
8.	Determine whether each stakeholder can contribute equipment, people, funds, or influence the best response NOTE: Liaison Officer is responsible for keeping IC informed of stakeholder concerns.	
9.	Assess funding, legal, and best response implications Funding issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Source(s) - Access - Limits/Ceiling Legal issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - documentation of response activities (legal record) - investigation interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - state/local - DOJ - USCG/Marine Board/NTSB - RP attorneys Best Response Drivers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human health and safety - The natural environment - The economy - Public communication - Stakeholder support - Organization 	
10.	Ensure objectives adequately address all items in Step 9	
11.	Identify operational situation changes that require augmenting/demobilizing resources	

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Goals, Objectives, Strategies Determined

Developing Goals, Objectives, Strategies

The checklist and matrix below will assist in developing goals, objectives, and strategies.

STEP	ACTION																						
1.	<p>Use the matrix below to assist in developing objectives and priorities</p> <p>Priorities are situation dependent and influenced by many factors</p> <p>Safety of life is always the highest priority</p> <p>Concerns may or may not be present</p> <p>Concerns should be considered in every incident</p>																						
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Concerns</th> <th>Issues</th> <th>Criteria to Meet</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>People</td> <td> General safety exposure Personal protective equipment Slips, trips, falls, drowning </td> <td> Overall objectives must be: Attainable Measurable Flexible </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Property</td> <td> Fire Contamination Flooding Source Control </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td> Sensitive areas Special interests Resources at risk </td> <td> Operational objectives must be: Specific </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Economic</td> <td> Industry Tourism Stakeholders </td> <td> Measurable Assignable </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public</td> <td> Safety Reaction/ Perception </td> <td> Reasonable Time specific </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Political</td> <td>Stakeholders</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Concerns	Issues	Criteria to Meet	People	General safety exposure Personal protective equipment Slips, trips, falls, drowning	Overall objectives must be: A ttainable M easurable F lexible	Property	Fire Contamination Flooding Source Control		Environment	Sensitive areas Special interests Resources at risk	Operational objectives must be: S pecific	Economic	Industry Tourism Stakeholders	M easurable A ssignable	Public	Safety Reaction/ Perception	R easonable T ime specific	Political	Stakeholders		
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Goals, Objectives, Strategies Determined (Cont'd)

Developing Goals, Objectives, Strategies (Cont'd) The checklist for developing goals, strategies, and objectives is continued below

STEP	ACTION	
2.	Provide guidance to Command and General Staff on goals, objectives, and strategies	
4.	Develop the general objectives of the IAP	
5.	Approve and authorize implementation of the IAP for each operational period	
6.	Approve the internal and external information dissemination strategy developed by the Information Officer <i>Examples: web pages, emails to media/other agencies/superiors/stakeholders</i> NOTE: The IC should emphasize the role that the IO plays in keeping the members of the response organization informed as well as the press and stakeholders.	



Effective and Efficient ICS Organization

Supervise Organization

Below is a brief checklist to assist in achieving overall effectiveness and efficiency of the organization

STEP	ACTION	
1.	Maintain effective span of control NOTE: Span of Control Rule states use between 3 and 7, optimally 5, direct subordinates NOTE: Consider the use of deputies and assistants	
2.	Assess subordinates performance; provide feedback/mentor subordinates Ensure information is flowing to all response elements Be alert for log jams Verify timeliness of actions and quality of products Determine if resources are sufficient Ascertain that feedback mechanism to IC is working properly	
3.	Take action to correct problems identified during assessment (Step 2)	
4.	Attend required coordination meetings Planning Pre-Ops brief Agency/Stakeholder/Non Government Organizations Os/Trustees (Initially and then when there are significant issues to be addressed; insist on a lead trustee.)	



Well Informed and Satisfied Stakeholders and Staff

Press Conference Preparation

Prepare for holding a press conference by having the Information Officer prepare the necessary briefing materials or by personally completing the Speaker Preparation job aid below.

STEP	ACTION	
1.	<p>Using the worksheet on the next page, participate in the preparation of a statement of commitment, empathy or concern to use as an introduction.</p> <p>Put yourself into the shoes of your audience and address what they are most concerned about.</p> <p><i>Example: “As you know we are faced with a challenging safety, environmental, economic event. All the involved parties, under the coordination of the U.S. Coast Guard are committed to working together to expeditiously resolve this incident. Public safety for both the local citizens as well as the responders ...”</i></p> <p>NOTE: From this point on, sentences should be short - 7 to 12 words in length.</p>	
2.	<p>Prepare one to three key messages you want to address and incorporate them into a bridge between step one and the body of your statement.</p> <p><i>Example: “We are “rescuing the survivors” or “removing oil from the environment”.</i></p>	
3.	<p>Repeat your first key message and state two to four facts that support it.</p> <p><i>Example: “We are rescuing the survivors and to date we have brought 200 people safely to shore from the disabled vessel.....</i></p>	
4.	<p>Repeat Step 3 for other key messages you may have prepared</p>	
5.	<p>Write a bridge between the body of your statement and your conclusion – repeat your one to three key messages again. Should be similar or exactly the same as the bridge in Step 2</p>	
6.	<p>State future actions as a conclusion</p>	

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Worksheet for Speaker Preparation

All written responses from previous page should be put on this sheet.

1. Statement _____

2. Key Message(s) _____

3. – 4. Key Message(s) with Supporting Facts _____

5. Repeat Key Message(s) _____

6. Future Actions _____



ICS Demobilized

Tasks

Below are demobilization responsibilities applicable to the Incident Commander.

STEP	ACTION	
1.	Receive/approve Demobilization Plan from Demobilization Unit Leader/Planning Section Chief	
2.	Review and approve lists of major resources proposed for demobilization	
3.	Brief subordinates regarding demobilization	
4.	Supervise demobilization of ICS NOTE: Expect demobilization to occur incrementally	
5.	Ensure all Section/Unit documentation is forwarded to the Documentation Unit	
6.	Brief relieving IC as appropriate	
7.	Keep Agency Administrator(s) informed regarding incident demob	



Information Exchange Matrix

Inputs/Outputs

Below is an input/output matrix to assist the Incident commander with obtaining information from other ICS positions and providing information to ICS positions.

MEET With:	WHEN:	IC OBTAINS:	IC PROVIDES:
Initial IC	Upon arrival	ICS 201 brief	Next Assignment
Other Unified Commander Representatives	Check-in brief Continuously Command Staff meeting	Commitment for: equipment, funding Consensus on decisions	ICS 201 brief Leadership
Stakeholders		Commitments for support Special concerns	Briefing on current situation Cleanup strategy
Trustees		Identification of lead trustee Pledge of cooperation with cleanup strategy	Briefing on current situation Cleanup strategy Not-to-interface resource commitment
Operations Section Chief	Check-in brief Planning meeting OPS Brief	Recommended strategies and tactics to meet the objectives Briefs on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary strategies Division/ Group boundaries Tactics/ Limitations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources needed • ICS 215 • OPS Facilities 	ICS 201 information IC expectations Immediate response objectives Response objectives Motivational remarks

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Information Exchange Matrix (Cont'd)

Inputs/Outputs Input/output matrix continues below.

MEET With:	WHEN:	IC OBTAINS:	IC PROVIDES:
Planning Section Chief	Check-in brief Once each ops cycle Planning meeting As needed Status change OPS brief	Briefs on: Overall situation Alternate strategies Recommendation for ICS 201/IAP transition Proposed resource demob list Update on incident	ICS 201 information IC expectations Response objectives for ICS 201 or IAP development ICS 201/IAP approval Approval New objectives if necessary Motivational remarks
Logistics Section Chief	Check-in brief Planning meeting OPS brief	Briefs on: Communication, traffic, safety, medical, facilities, resources	ICS 201 information IC expectations Response objectives Motivational remarks
Finance/Admin Section Chief	Check-in brief Planning meeting OPS brief	Financial report	ICS 201 information IC expectations Response objectives Motivational remarks

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Information Exchange Matrix (Cont'd)

Inputs/Outputs

The input/output matrix is continued below.

MEET With:	WHEN:	IC OBTAINS:	IC PROVIDES:
Liaison Officer	Check-in brief Planning meeting OPS brief	Cooperating agency/ stakeholder concerns/issues	ICS 201 information IC expectations Response objectives Motivational remarks
Information Officer	Check-in brief Planning meeting As needed OPS brief	Media considerations regarding work plan Speaker preparation	ICS 201 information IC expectations Response objectives Motivational remarks
Safety Officer	Check-in brief Planning meeting Command Staff meeting OPS brief	Safety concerns regarding work plan Status of site safety plan	ICS 201 information IC expectations Response objectives IC expectations and concerns Motivational remarks
Documentation Unit Leader	Planning meeting Command Staff meeting	Feedback on state of documentation	Response objectives Policy on role and responsibilities of the DUL
Resources Unit Leader	Planning meeting OPS brief	Brief on resources available	Response objectives Motivational remarks

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Information Exchange Matrix (Cont'd)

Inputs/Outputs

The input/output matrix is continued below.

MEET With:	WHEN:	IC OBTAINS:	IC PROVIDES:
Situation Unit Leader	Planning meeting OPS brief	Wx/Sea forecast Future projections for incident	Response objectives Motivational remarks
Demobilization Unit Leader	Planning meeting	Demobilization Plan	Response objectives
Division/ Group Supervisors Task Force Leaders Strike team Leaders	OPS brief		Motivational remarks
Media	Press conference	Media concerns	Briefing on incident status and plans